# Floating ideologies: Metamorphoses of graphic ‚Germanness‘

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# Chapter 11
# Floating ideologies: Metamorphoses of graphic "Germanness"

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## 1. Introduction

After decades of almost exclusive focusing on spoken language, a growing interest in written communication and scriptal variation can be noticed in sociolinguistics recently (cf. Jaffe 2000; Johnson 2005; Androutsopoulos 2007; Sebba 2007; this volume). This interest, however, is still in many ways limited. It is limited quantitatively, in that only a few scholars systematically explore the sociolinguistic relevance of scriptal variation at all (cf. Sebba 2009 for a recent overview), and it is limited qualitatively insofar as the existing studies focus only on a small range of scriptal variation, particularly on orthography and spelling. Other aspects of scriptality (such as typography) are virtually unexplored sociolinguistically. A "sociolinguistics of writing" (Androutsopoulos 2007: 86) thus still has a long way to go even to find out how large the field it attempts to explore actually is.

The existing research on writing and its use (cf. Günther and Ludwig 1994 for an overview) might support such an exploration in general, but as far as the social implications of writing are concerned, sociolinguistics cannot draw much on that research either, since it does not attach much importance to variation and social significance (again, cf. Sebba 2009). Even if visual and material aspects of scriptality have become a topic of research in recent years (cf., e.g., Scollon and Scollon 2003; Androutsopoulos 2004; Stöckl 2005; van Leeuwen 2005, 2006; see Spitzmüller 2006 for an overview), sociolinguistic aspects are by and large neglected. This also holds true for the so-called *social semiotic* approaches to text and typography (Stöckl 2005; Scollon and Scollon 2003; van Leeuwen 2005, 2006), as they usually do not go beyond attempts to categorize visual graphic means. At least as far as scriptality is concerned, they still very much highlight the *semiotic*, while hiding the *social* part of their research manifesto. The present chapter sets out to explore one of the many plots in this huge unexplored sociolinguistic field of scriptality: the phenomenon of *graphic ideologies*. That is, it focuses on sets of beliefs attributed to and expressed by means of graphic phenomena.

The chapter thus extends the sociolinguistic topic of language ideologies to the graphic modes of communication and, in doing so, argues that graphic variation is to be considered as a socially relevant communicative practice. The phenomenon in question is exemplified by analyses of graphic ideologies of "Germanness," i.e., graphic practices that are (assumed to be) used in order to express aspects of "being German" or, for that matter, of perceived "German" identity. A special focus is laid on the question of how such perceptions are negotiated in discourse and attributed to the graphic elements.

The organization of the chapter is as follows: first, the concept of graphic ideologies is introduced and defined (section 2). In this context, the chapter discusses how meaning is attributed to graphic elements. Then the chapter turns to the example case and describes, by focusing on selected graphic means, how "Germanness" is attributed to and expressed by graphic phenomena (section 3). The observation includes historical developments as well as recent examples. Thus, the chapter aims to show how graphic ideologies are both discursively rooted and floating, i.e., that they are both part of a collective knowledge and permanent subject to negotiation.

## 2. Graphic ideologies: Widening the scope

### 2.1. Graphic ideologies as a sociolinguistic topic

Language ideologies and their metapragmatic manifestation in discourse have gained much interest in recent sociolinguistics (cf., e.g., Blommaert 1999b; Schieffelin, Woolard and Kroskrity 1998; Johnson and Ensslin 2007). In contrast, research on ideologies of script is still in its infancy. In language ideology research, script is usually not recognized as a matter in its own right, and if it is, the subject is usually limited to orthography and spelling (again cf. Jaffe 2000; Johnson 2005; Sebba 2007). However, interactants not only display values and beliefs towards and by means of languages and varieties, but also towards and by means of the use of graphic elements. Alongside language ideologies, sociolinguistics thus also needs to consider what I shall call *graphic ideologies* here. It is assumed that graphic ideologies affect the social value of communicative practices as much as language ideologies do. It is further assumed that there are analogous forms of values and beliefs attributed to and expressed by means of other modes of communication (such as gesture, proxemics, mediality). The consideration of graphic ideologies proposed here is thus just one step towards a general widening of the scope of sociolinguistics towards *ideologies of communication*.

Drawing on Michael Silverstein's (1979: 193) classic definition, graphic ideologies can provisionally be defined as any sets of beliefs about graphic communicative means articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived orders and communicative use of graphic elements.[1] "Graphic communicative means" thereby subsume all sorts of communicative means that use the visual channel and that are used in texts (this, in turn, excludes nonverbal visual phenomena such as gesture). The range includes images, phenomena of scriptality, and parascriptality – such as spelling, typography (type faces, layout, emphasizing, etc.), graphemic features (e.g., diacritics, special characters) and the choice of writing systems – as well as generic graphic phenomena such as the use of color (cf. Twyman 1982 for a useful categorization). National ideologies, for instance, are graphically represented by such diverse phenomena as symbols (e.g., flags or the Chinese dragon), colors (such as green for Ireland, orange for the Netherlands; cf. Demarmels 2009: 238–251 for further examples), images both showing historically rooted settings (e.g., streams of refugees or central figures) or fixed scenes (e.g., the German 1848 revolutionaries holding the black-red-golden flag; cf. Johnson 2007), writing systems (such as katakana for Japanese), graphematic peculiarities (e.g., the Scandinavian <ø>, the German <ß>), specifics concerning the way of writing (e.g., direction, calligraphy), specific typefaces (e.g., uncial for Ireland), and probably also layout and material issues (writing material, positioning, etc.).

These graphic representations are both intertwined with each other and with verbal representations. Graphic representations within texts interrelate with the text content, with stereotypical argumentation, key words, metaphors, intertextual relations, etc. *In actu*, several non-verbal modes add to that. In the scenario of a demonstration, for instance, both the verbal and the graphic elements of banners, T-shirts, flyers, etc. interact with the overall performance, with spoken utterances, the non-verbal behavior, the look, and the overall *habitus* of the demonstrators, with culturally rooted genres of demonstrating, etc. In short, *ideology communication* is, as a rule, *multimodal communication*. All modes constitute the ideological *message*. Therefore, as many of these phenomena as possible are to be considered in a joint analysis.

On the other hand, however, graphic elements cannot be analyzed or categorized as independent from their multimodal embedding, either. No graphic element represents a given meaning or, for that matter, a given ideology *per*

1. Silverstein's (1979: 193) original definition reads: "linguistic ideologies … are any sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use."

*se*. Graphic elements usually serve as *contextualization cues* (Auer and di Luzio 1992). They are involved in the process of context construction, but their interpretation is itself dependent on the context that is set up by means of all communicative modes (see section 2.2). Therefore, it does not make sense to set up a context-abstract "grammar" of visual elements or to look for distinctive semantic characteristics of specific graphic features (as Crystal 1998 and van Leeuwen 2006: 147–150 do). Due to the dynamic nature of graphic elements, such attempts are bound to fail.

Potential fields of investigation are the socio-semiotic values attributed to given graphic elements, the actual use of such elements, conventions, policies, and prescriptions of graphic usage, graphic stereotypes, metadiscursive negotiations of graphic practices as well as identity work, and "othering" by means of visual communication. Thanks to language ideology research, both the theories and the methods that are needed to proceed are already at hand. If and how these methods can be adapted to graphic phenomena, however, is subject to further discussion.

In the present chapter, a *societal treatment approach* (cf. Garrett 2005: 1251–1252) to communicative ideologies is chosen, i.e., the analysis seeks to reveal how ideology is constructed metapragmatically in discourse. This discourse-analytical method follows the attempt by communicative ideology research (as proposed by Silverstein) to concentrate on *articulated* values and beliefs (as opposed to the attempts of sociolinguistic attitude research to reveal *covert* values and beliefs or some "hidden" intention of the interactants; cf. Garrett 2005). In this way, the research avoids many traps it might fall into if it tried to link communicative practices with something "un-communicated" or even "un-communicatable."

## 2.2. Floating semiosis: The dynamics of graphic elements

Since graphic elements interrelate with other modes of communication as well as with the situational context of use, their semantics is highly dynamic. It is, however, by no means incidental. It can be assumed that both the use and the interpretation of graphic elements are bound to *graphic knowledge* (cf. Antos and Spitzmüller 2007), which is itself a specific form of *semiotic knowledge* as modeled by Rudi Keller (1998), or, put sociolinguistically, a form of communicative competence (*sensu* Hymes 1974).

Keller (1998: 90) argues that "[c]ommunication … is an act that consists of giving the other hints that put into motion by that person a process of interpretation, the aim of which is discovering the desired goal of the at-

tempted influence, that is, understanding the speaker's act." In order to enable communication, two prerequisites are thus required. First and foremost, the addressees need to recognize the signs used as distinct entities. Thus, signs have to be *perceptible*, or, for that matter, "whoever *believes* these things are signs must also *believe* them to be perceptible" (Keller 1998: 93; my emphases). Then the perceptible entities must be recognized as something that is, in the addressee's view, intentionally used by the producer in order to give the addressee interpretative hints. Thus, signs must be *interpretable* (cf. Keller 1998: 92–93). *Interpretability* means that the addressee is able to guess (or in fact *assumes* s/he is able to guess) in which way the sender intends to influence her or him by using a specific sign. In order to do so, s/he needs to know how a specific sign is used in general or how it might be used in the given situation. S/he needs to know the *rules of use* of the given signs, which are, according to Keller (1998: 52), equal to their "meaning."

Meaning is thus negotiated interactively within the process of communication, whereby any participant draws on her/his *semiotic knowledge*, i.e., her/his knowledge of usage rules of certain signs. Within this negotiation process, not only might the "correct" interpretation become subject to discussion, but also the *interpretability* itself (cf. Keller 1998: 93), and even the *perceptibility* might be a matter of dispute. In short, signs are not just "there," they "emerge in the process of our attempts to reach communicative goals" (Keller 1998: vii). In other words, the semiotics of graphic elements is *floating*. Consequently, the question of whether something is perceived as a sign and, if so, how this something is interpreted, depends on the semiotic knowledge of the addressees as well as on the semiotic knowledge that the producer is supposed to share with the addressees, in the latter's opinion. In light of this, the question of whether graphic elements "have" some meaning or not, is put wrongly. The more sensible question is the following: under what circumstances is a given meaning *ascribed* to graphic elements by the participants of a given discourse, i.e., under what circumstances (1) are graphic elements perceived as distinctive elements by specific addressees, and (2) do individuals or a group of addressees assume that whoever produced the text used these graphic elements *deliberately* in order to give the addressees interpretative hints? From this perspective, the observation that specific graphic elements are significant to some people while they are "meaningless" to others is no longer surprising.

While the notion of *semiotic knowledge* proves to be crucial for the understanding of the dynamics of graphic elements in communication, one weak point in Keller's theory is his strong focus on deliberation and intentionality, even though intentionality includes *assumed* intentionality. What

is missing in the concept, particularly if *indexical* meaning is considered, is the idea of what one might call the *knowledge of context*. *Context* thereby refers to the production context and particularly to the phenomena that are not (assumed to be) "intentionally" chosen by the producer, but that are nevertheless interpreted by the recipient as indices of certain historical, social, or cultural backgrounds of the text and its author. It also includes what Blommaert (2005: 56–66) calls "forgotten contexts," the context of "data history," "text trajectories," and not least "resources as context" (Blommaert 2005: 58–62). The latter becomes important if recipients assume that they can trace back the graphic appearance of a text to a specific set of resources that was available to the author or, more negatively, to a specific set of resources to which the author was limited, and if they further assume this specific set of resources to be typical of a particular situational, historical, cultural, or social setting or to be symptomatic of specific competences or abilities of the text producer. It is evident that the assumptions about this sort of context frame the recipients' interpretation and the evaluation of both author and text.

In summary, graphic elements are regarded as dynamic, but discursively rooted phenomena that acquire semiotic relevance in the context of a given, discursively rooted graphic knowledge by means of (meta)pragmatic action. The analysis focuses on how the knowledge of a given community of actors is discursively constructed – it does not seek to reveal "hidden" intentionality, but uttered semiotic ascriptions.

In the following section, this will be exemplified by means of graphic ideologies of "Germanness," in which specific graphic elements will be selected. A historical overview of the development of these graphic ideologies and a corpus analysis will shed light on the discursive roots and the scope of the ideological meaning. Then a complementary micro-analysis of a discussion on *Wikipedia* will demonstrate that the idea of graphic-ideological negotiation can be taken quite literally: it will show how interactants engage in a tug-of-war concerning ideological meaning.

## 3. Graphic "Germanness": Exemplary analyses

### 3.1. Analytical scope

Many different graphic elements are used to visualize "Germanness," i.e., positive and negative auto- and hetero-stereotypes about what is supposed to be "German." Of course, these elements vary both in quality and quantity, depending on the respective discourse actors, the values they try to express,

and their graphic knowledge. In this context, it is important to bear in mind that so-called "national identities" are always promoted by specific groups, and that they are bound to group identities. However, some graphic elements keep recurring in different contexts. In what follows, the analysis concentrates on two such types of phenomena, viz.:

1. graphemes peculiar to German writing (<ä>, <Ä>, <ö>, <Ö>, <ü>, <Ü>, <ß>) and
2. blackletter type.[2]

These two categories are interrelated in many ways. They are often combined in texts, in which they contextualize each other. On the other hand, however, they are also subject to different conditions of use. Basically, this can be traced back to their *perceptibility* and their *interpretability* in different communicative settings. What is crucial here is what Karl Bühler ([1934] 1990: 50) called *the principle of abstractive relevance*. According to this principle, the more strongly a given form is ascribed to a certain semiotic function, the more its use for other semiotic functions is limited. The graphematic elements may serve to demonstrate this. Since the umlauts and the <ß>-character are usually distinctive orthographic elements (i.e., *graphemes*) in German texts, it is difficult to use them in order to signify other things, e.g., sociosemiotic values. These characters have been "absorbed" by their graphematic function and are thus, semiotically speaking, no longer *perceptible* (and thus not *interpretable*) on other semiotic levels. This is completely different in the context of other graphematic systems that do not ascribe these characters to graphematic function. In English texts, for instance, where these characters are not bound to the graphematic system and where they are thus highly perceptible, they usually serve as signs of foreignness, or, more specifically, as signs of "Germanness," and whatever ideology is bound to this. Consider the use of umlauts in the context of advertising (*foreign branding*) and popular culture (e.g., *Häagen Dasz*, *Motörhead*). Such "foreign" characters are typical means of what can be called *graphic crossing*, i.e., the juxtaposition of different graphic means, at least one of which is perceived as being "foreign" (cf. Spitzmüller 2007a). The same holds true for blackletter typefaces.

However, whether graphic elements are perceived as being "foreign" or not, again depends on the graphic knowledge of the actors. If, for example,

2. The term *blackletter* or *broken type* (*gebrochene Schrift* in German) denotes a class of families of types or typefaces that are characterized by broken lining. The class consists of subclasses such as *Fraktur*/*Gotisch* (*Gothic*), *Schwabacher*, *Textura*, *Rotunda*, and others, each of which shows particular formal features (cf. Bain, Shaw and Bertheau 1998).

their use is traced back to some specific contextual setting (e.g., the historical production context or genre conventions, cf. newspaper headlines or beer labels), other potential significations are put last by the recipients. Hence, the actual interpretation is often subject to discussion.

Furthermore, ascriptions may generally flow. Again, the "German" graphemes demonstrate this. In the context of the spelling reform, the letter <ß> was widely attributed to sociosemiotic values. Since one of the most visible changes in German orthography was the replacement of <ß> by <ss> after short vocals (cf. *daß* → *dass* [conj. 'that'][3]), the character was discursively loaded with ideological values within the debate. Conspiracy theorists characterized the reform itself as "secret affair 'ß'" (Röhrig 2004) and the letter was discursively transformed into a sign of "Germanness." The "most German of all letters" (*der deutscheste aller Buchstaben*), as the newspaper *Die Zeit* put it (Stock 1998), was attributed the role of the most prominent "victim" of the reform, which was widely perceived as a *threat* not only to spelling, but to "the" German language and as such to "the" German identity in general (cf. Johnson 2005). Since then, the "(dis-)missed character" (Müller 2008) has not only been deliberately used by opponents of the reform as a symbol for "correct" or "proper" German, but the recipients who perceive this usage have also been invited to join the club of "proper Germans" – the circle of "those who know." Referring to Irvine and Gal (2000: 37), this can be regarded as a process of *iconization*: the graphic feature turned into an "iconic representation" of a specific social group.[4] Something similar happened to blackletter typefaces, though within a much longer process. The following section elaborates on this.

## 3.2. Blackletter as a "German type"

Blackletter was bound to (particularly political) ideology right from the beginning of printing. In many European countries, these typefaces were

3. Strictly speaking, this was the result of the attempt to make the rules more coherent. While <ß> and <ss> were used rather arbitrarily before the reform, the reformers tried to bind the use of the corresponding graph/digraph to the syllable weight.
4. Irvine and Gal introduce the concept of *iconization* as one of three semiotic processes (*iconization*, *fractal recursivity*, *erasure*) "by which people construct ideological representations of linguistic differences" (Irvine and Gal 2000: 37). *Iconization* is defined as "a transformation of the sign relationship between linguistic features (or varieties) and the social image with which they are linked" (Irvine and Gal 2000: 37).

dropped more or less completely (except for historicizing contexts) in favor of roman typefaces during the phase of incunable printing (Italy, France, Spain) in the middle of the sixteenth century (England) or during the eighteenth century (the Netherlands, Sweden). In Germany, however – as well as in some other countries such as Finland, Denmark, Estonia, Bohemia, and Slovenia – blackletter was preferred for vernacular texts until the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century, while foreign (particularly Latin) texts were, as a rule, typeset with roman typefaces.[5] This bi-scriptal practice was even common within texts. Loanwords and even loan morphemes were typeset in roman, while everything that was considered "proper German" was typeset in blackletter.

In this context, blackletter came to be known as *German type* ("Deutsche Schrift"; cf. Newton 2003), an attribution that is currently recurrent. The juxtaposition of blackletter and roman also became part of purist practice (cf. von Polenz 1994: 61), which aimed at separating "proper German" from "foreign languages." However, there is more to it. Especially in the context of Protestantism, blackletter and roman were assigned to political ideologies. It is well known that Luther and the Protestants deliberately chose German for many of their writings not only to "reach" the public, but also as a distinct sociosemiotic means (as opposed to the clerical Latin; cf. von Polenz 2000: 229–251). It is much less known, however, that they used blackletter (as opposed to, notabene, *roman*) in the same vein. As Flood (1996) points out, a deontic typographic system was used in the Luther Bible throughout the editions from 1541 through 1546. In the preface of the 1545 edition, the editor Georg Rörer noted:

> ZVm dritten sind die zweierley Buchstaben / der ABC vnd der *ABC* gestalt / gesetzt / dem vnerfaren Leser vnterscheid anzuzeigen / Das wo dieser ABC stehen / die Schrifft rede von gnade / trost etc. Die andern *ABC* von zorn / straffe etc. (Biblia Germanica [1545] 1967: fol. CCCCVII$^{r}$; Fraktur in orig., emphases: roman upshape)
>
> [Third, we use two sorts of letters, the form of ABC [blackletter] and *ABC* [roman], in order to signal the inexperienced reader the following difference: where this ABC [blackletter] is used, the Scriptures are talking of mercy, comfort etc., whereas the other *ABC* [roman] refers to wrath, punishment, etc.]

Even though this system was allegedly evaluated by Luther as *utter nonsense* ("lauter Narrenwerck") (cf. Flood 1996: 185) and was dropped in later editions (probably since it was theologically too simplistic), the practice

5. Interestingly, there is also a vital blackletter tradition in Mexico, which probably influenced US-American tattooing (cf. Paoli 2006).

showed up in other Protestant texts as well, particularly in pamphlets such as Luther's seminal *Wider das Bapstum zu Rom vom Teuffel gestifft* (1545). On the front page of this text, the initial letters of the words *Rom* ('Rome') and *Teuffel* ('devil') were set in roman type. A mixture of Latin versus German and blackletter versus roman can be found in a woodcut by Lukas Cranach (1545), where "the Pope speaks Latin, printed in roman, the response is a mixture of Latin and Italian, printed in italic, and Luther's German verses are set in a self-assertive gothic" (Flood 1996: 188; also cf. Spitzmüller 2009 for details). With regard to this, Flood concludes that

> [t]he availability of the scriptures in the vernacular was a central plank of Protestantism, and gothic types were the physical face of the vernacular in Germany, a typographical manifesto, as it were. (Flood 1996: 187)

Since the German bourgeoisie had its roots in Protestantism, it can be assumed that the Protestants' practice directly influenced the graphic ideology of the bourgeoisie. In any case, both purism (cf. Spitzmüller 2007b) and the ideological use of typefaces became a central aspect both in the communicative practice and in the metadiscourse of the German literal elite. The latter resulted in the so-called *Fraktur-Antiqua-debate* (cf. Killius 1999; Newton 2003), which was about the question of whether blackletter or roman is the more appropriate type for German texts. This highly political debate reached its peak during the nineteenth century, and it even dominated proceedings in parliament. The vehemence of the debate, the rise of which in the nineteenth century as the century of German state constitution and nationalism was no coincidence, illustrates how much the "script question" was about ideology.

However, the debate was also a symptom of an incipient change. Indeed, printers were slowly starting to switch to roman typefaces for German texts during the nineteenth century, a process that accelerated as of the beginning of the twentieth century. The final cut, however, was performed by a political verdict, which was ironically issued by the National Socialists, who had heavily used blackletter typefaces themselves before (cf. Willberg 1998; Schwemer-Scheddin 1998). The so-called *Frakturverbot* (*Fraktur ban*), a "Führer's edict" published in January 1941, disallowed the use of blackletter typefaces in official texts and in doing so catalyzed the ongoing switch to roman type in Germany, which was completed soon thereafter. Argumentatively, the Nazis performed an ideological pirouette: by labeling blackletter as *Schwabacher Judenlettern* ('Schwabacher Jewish letters'), the Nazis tried to stigmatize the typeface as being "un-German" or even (within their ideology) "anti-German." This strategy had already been chosen some weeks before in another "Führer's edict" that had banned "Jewish practice" lin-

guistic purism (published on 19/11/1940; cf. Spitzmüller 2007b: 267). Both edicts can be regarded as parts of a general attempt by the National Socialists to emancipate from the traditional nationalist groups whose support was no longer needed and to establish a more "international" image instead.

## 3.3. Blackletter and/as nationalism

In modern Germany, the use of blackletter is – with the exceptions discussed in the next section – limited to a small range of genres, viz. advertising and economic texts that are bound to "tradition" or "good plain" (German) food, newspaper headings, as well as historicizing texts (cf. Schwemer-Scheddin 1998: 57; Schopp 2002: 111–113). Figure 1 displays some typical examples:


(a) Newspaper front page


(b) "Good plain" (German) food and beer


(c) Historicizing text

*Figure 1.* Genre-typical use of blackletter typefaces.

In all cases (with the exception of newspaper headings, where the use of blackletter follows a transcultural convention), however, blackletter type still serves to contextualize "Germanness" in one way or another (and the respective graphic knowledge goes beyond the German-speaking world, as figure 1b demonstrates).

Apart from this limited range of genres, blackletter typefaces are widely stigmatized as letters of the past and symbols of those who live in the past. Particularly (and despite the fact that the Nazis issued the *Fraktur ban*), blackletter is largely associated with National Socialism and reactionary politics

if it is used outside the aforementioned traditionalizing context (cf. Willberg 1998: 49; Schwemer-Scheddin 1998: 57). Hence, it is not surprising that blackletter was avoided in political propaganda after 1945 (and even more so after 1969, in the wake of the critical re-evaluation of the younger German past), a process that has been observed in diverse German-speaking countries (cf. Demarmels 2009 for Switzerland, esp. pp. 249–251).

However, blackletter type did not vanish completely from the political arena. If the context of nationalism and "Germanness" in a nationalist sense is desired as a frame of reference, the type is frequently used as a contextualization cue. On the one hand, the neo-nationalist scene used blackletter typefaces (next to particular symbols, colors, etc.) in order to signal their ideology right from the beginning. In this sense, blackletter is used systematically on flyers, T-shirts, banners, book covers, and CD covers as well as on the Internet (cf. Meier-Schuegraf 2005), and it has developed into a transnational sign of this community (cf. figure 2):[6]


(a) Trade in Nazi devotional objects


(b) Neo-nationalist CD cover


(c) Neonazi demonstration


(d) Lighter "Nationalist"

*Figure 2.* Blackletter as an identity signal (1): neo-nationalist use.

6. However, the neo-nationalist scene does not use blackletter only to indicate their ideology. A likewise common, but more subtle choice is the chisel font *Reporter* that has been designed by Carl Winkow in 1938.

Furthermore, blackletter is also used by other conservative groups that try to maintain or restore some kind of German "national" identity. Unsurprisingly, this often also entails linguistic purism (cf. figure 3):


(a) *Deutschtum.net*: linguistic purism meets blackletter


(b) *Sprachkampf.de.vu*


(c) *Bismarckbund.de*: "conservative, critical, constructive"

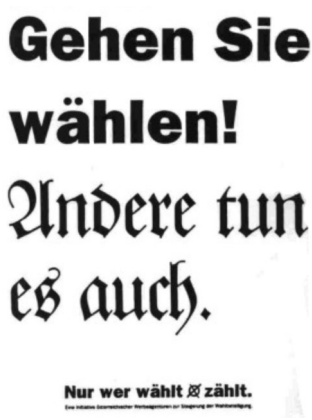
*Figure 3.* Blackletter as an identity signal (2): constructing "German national identity".

On the other hand, blackletter is also utilized by the anti-fascist movement and by critics of neo-nationalism as a means to articulate their displeasure with neo-nationalist tendencies in general or in order to stigmatize certain parties or organizations as being nationalistic or reactionary (cf. figure 4):


(a) "Zero tolerance for Nazis. Xenophobia must stop!" [background colour brown in original]


(b) "Educational material: Recognize rightwing extremism!"


(c) "Fashion we never want to see again!"




(d) "Go voting! Others do as well."

*Figure 4.* Blackletter as a stigma: dissociating/critical use.

In both cases, the use of the typefaces can be considered as routine and common practice. In other words, the users presuppose that the anticipated addressees share their graphic knowledge and that they understand their semiotic hints. In some cases, the message even relies on this knowledge (cf. fig. 4d).

In this light and given the justified sensitivity of the German public to neo-nationalism, it is not surprising that blackletter is widely perceived as being "reactionary" and "nationalist" in itself, at least if it is used in a political sense, and that typesetters regard the type as a "taboo subject" (Schwemer-Scheddin 1998: 57) or lament that "[t]heir function as a vehicle of traditional writing . . . has been spoiled permanently by the Nazis" (Willberg 1998: 49).

Evidence for such ascriptions can be found in media texts dealing with blackletter type.[7] Even if some texts argue in favor of reconsidering blackletter as being part of German culture, the vast majority relate blackletter type to nationalism and particularly to neo-nationalism. Some typical examples are the following (my translations):

> We can assume that the cleansing action to which France has devoted itself [i.e., legal linguistic purism] will find much sympathy in our country – on the side of the rather old-fashioned, nationally motivated purists, who wrack their brain by means of Fraktur type whether [the Anglicism] *Hostess* should be rather Germanized as *Geleiterin*, *Begleiterin*, *Fremdendienerin*, *Gasthilfe*, *Gastpflegerin*, *Gastbetreuerin* or *Gastpflege*. (Zimmer 1976)

> . . . the titles . . . look sensational and cheap. For instance Hans Modrow's "Ich wollte ein anderes Deutschland" or Marion Gräfin Dönhoff's "Zivilisiert den Kapitalismus" . . . Both titles are typeset in Fraktur, as if they were thrillers from the Nazi era. (Esch 2002)

> The other two newspapers are called "Der Insel Bote" or "Der Fahnenträger aus Pommern", the latter equipped with the subtitle "circular letter for national socialists" and the addition "proud, German, and free." Typeset in Fraktur, of course. (Wirth 2002)

> The sign "Air Snack" [English in orig.] is typeset in Fraktur. Nevertheless, no Nazis are in sight. (Scheffler 2004)

## 3.4. A pop-cultural revival?

As of the 1970s, however, blackletter type has explored new areas of use, namely popular culture and subculture. Most prominently, the type was adapted by the hard rock and heavy metal scene (cf. Androutsopoulos 2001: 21; 2004). Given the fact that this genre, the bands' habitus and the song texts are very much connected with Gothic mythology, militarism, nationalism, and Teutonism, and also taking into consideration that many artists preferred provocative performances that focused on violence, machismo and militarism, this choice cannot be regarded as independent from the aforementioned associations. Although the use of the type also served to establish a mythological/medieval context, it can be assumed that the associations with "Germanness" and nationalism were invoked deliberately.

7. For the analysis, the German *DeReKo II* corpus was consulted (sub-corpus *W-öffentlich* [all public texts of written language, mostly consisting of German newspaper texts, ca. 2.3 million word forms], cf. *http://.ids-mannheim.de*).

The use of other graphic elements supports this interpretation. Apart from Gothic and militarist symbols, the most striking phenomenon in this context is the so-called *heavy metal umlaut* or *röck döt*, i.e., the use of tremata in hard rock and heavy metal bands' names (cf. Spitzmüller 2007a; Wikipedia 2008). This phenomenon made its appearance at the beginning 1970s, when bands such as *Blue Öyster Cult* (in 1972) and *Motörhead* (in 1975) introduced this graphematic variation to the scene. It is characteristic of this phenomenon that it does not serve graphematic purposes, apparently; spelling variations of the respective band names with and without the tremata are common on the Internet, even on the official band pages. Neither do the tremata refer to a phonological difference. Band names such as *Motörhead* and *Mötley Crüe* are commonly pronounced as if the tremata were not there ([ˈməʊtəhed], [ˈmaːtli ˌkruː]), at least by speakers who do not have umlaut graphemes in their writing system.[8] According to Gidley (2000), the musicians of the Californian band *Mötley Crüe* were rather irritated to be welcomed by a German audience shouting [ˈmœtli ˌkryːə]. Likewise, *Motörhead*'s front man Lemmy Kilmister insists that the trema was only put on the <o> "to look mean" and that it does not have an impact on the pronunciation of the band's name (cf. *Wave Magazine* 2002). Thus, the heavy metal umlaut is not functionally equivalent to the diaeresis that was common in traditional English spelling to mark the syllabic separation of consequent vowels (e.g. *coöperation*). Contrary to that, the heavy metal umlaut is a sign of "foreignness" and thus serves different purposes.

Concerning the origin of the metal umlaut, many rumors and few facts are available. It is well known that the umlaut was already common in English advertising as of the early 1960s. The ice cream brand *Häagen Dasz*, created 1961 in New York City, is usually listed as the earliest example for this kind of foreign branding (the umlaut in the brand's name, however, was supposed to give the ice cream a Scandinavian flair; cf. Campbell 2003). As far as the use of the umlaut within popular culture is concerned, various people claim that they had the original idea. The most appealing anecdote is ascribed to rock critic Richard Meltzer, who allegedly claims to have suggested the umlauts to *Blue Öyster Cult's* manager, retrospectively arguing that "Metal had a Wagnerian aspect anyway" (cf. Gidley 2000; Wikipedia 2008). Regardless of whether this is true or not, the umlaut that is "generally associated with German" according to the *Oxford Dictionary of American Usage and Style*

8. Cf. for instance the IPA notation of the respective band names on the *Wikipedia*, the explanations in the *Metal Umlaut* article (Wikipedia 2008) as well as the audio version of that article.

(Garner 2000: 100) certainly fits the aforementioned frame. At all events, the idea was adapted by many other bands. It kept reappearing within band names (e.g., *Mötley Crüe*, *Lääz Rockit*, *ZnöWhite*, *Beowülf*, *Deströyer 666*, *Blöödhag*, *Infernäl Mäjesty*, *Infernö*, *Teräsbetoni*, *Hell Dörmer*, *Pig Irön*), on album titles (*Cultösaurus Erectus*, *The Revölution by Night*, *March ör Die*) and marked dedicated record labels (such as *Leathür Records*).


*Figure 5.* Heavy metal typography.

Apparently, the umlaut turned from a symbol of "Germanness" and "foreignness" into an icon of the metal scene itself – a *genre cue* (Androutsopoulos 2001: 20) – in the wake of this process. Symptoms of this transformation were the increasing use of other "foreign," "weird," or even non-existing letters and diacritics (e.g., *Underøath*, *DÅÅTH*), the shift of the tremata to other letters (cf. *Queensrÿche*, *Kïll Cheerleadër*, *GRÖTÜS*), and the incipient parodistic use of the tremata. The latter manifests itself in self-referential band naming such as *Ümlaut* (a Finnish punk band) or *Spıñal Tap* (a heavy metal mock-up project), parodistic album names such as *Nö Sleep 'til Viehauktiönshalle Öldenbürg* by the German punk band *Die Ärzte* (who changed the graphematically required umlaut in their band name to a three-dotted <ä> in 2003),

and recently in the naming of a character in the video game *Guitar Hero II*, viz. *Lars Ümlaut*. Further examples include titles of books that deal with heavy metal, such as *Fargo Rock City*. *A Heavy Metal odyssey in rural Nörth Daköta* (Klosterman 2003) and the following "news" from the US-American satirical newspaper *The Onion* (cf. Wikipedia 2008 for further examples):

> Ünited Stätes Toughens Image With Umlauts?APRIL 30, 1997
>
> In a move designed to make the United States seem more "bad-assed and scary in a quasi-heavy-metal manner," Congress officially changed the nation's name to the Ünited Stätes of Ämerica . . . . "Much like Mötley Crüe and Motörhead, the Ünited Stätes is not to be messed with," said Sen. James Inhofe (R-OK). An upcoming redesign of the Ämerican flag will feature the new name in burnished silver wrought in a jagged, gothic font and bolted to a black background. A new national anthem is also in the works by composer Glenn Danzig, tentatively titled "Howl Of The She-Demon." (*The Onion* 1997)

Blackletter typefaces were most likely subject to a similar process. From a symbol of scene-specific values connected with stereotypes of "Germanness," they obviously turned into an index of the heavy metal genre or scene itself. In connection with this process, the typefaces have undergone a semiotic re-evaluation that have gone beyond the scene proper. As indices of values and attitudes that were promoted by the heavy metal scene ("toughness," "determination," "intransigenc," etc.) and due to the popularity of the genre during the 1980s and 1990s, blackletter type became appealing for other groups as well if they wanted to connect to these values or to the popularity of the rock music genre. It was probably for such reasons that blackletter type was also adapted by the hip hop scene, particularly by the "gangsta rap" genre (cf. Androutsopoulos 2004), although this use is also much influenced by gang tattooing, which is itself partly influenced by the rock music genre, but probably also by other sources (this history still needs to be written). At this stage, at any rate, the semiotic flow seems to have lost its connection to the construction of "Germanness."

This is perhaps not the case with hip hop, but certainly in the subsequent stage of the flow, when the enormous popularity of hip hop culture in the target group of young people inspired the fashion and advertising industry to use blackletter on clothes and advertisements, explicit ideological references to "Germanness" can be excluded. Rather than that, the industry apparently drew on positive self-ascribed values of the hip hop scene, such as "coolness," "street credibility," and "authenticity." These values were also expressed by means of other modes such as images and language (cf. the image and the slogan *I am what I am* in figure 6). Apparently, blackletter has undergone

a process of *re-semiotization*, in the sense of a positive re-evaluation of its ideological meaning:

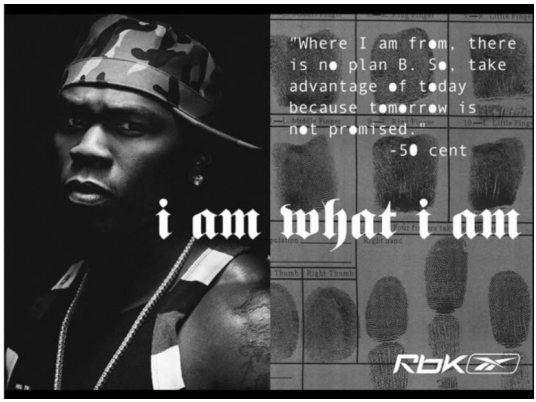



*Figure 6.* Blackletter typefaces in current advertisement.

How was all of this perceived in Germany? Did the metamorphosis of blackletter in the context of popular culture change its ideological meaning? Did the semiotic flow change the semiotic knowledge? According to some recent typographic publications, this is undoubtedly the case. The graphic designer Judith Schalansky, for instance, announces her book *Fraktur mon Amour* that sets out to "celebrate the renaissance of Fraktur" (Schalansky 2006: 15) as follows:

> Nike writes in Fraktur. Reebok too. Fraktur decorates shirts, posters, scene flyers and naked skin. And that, although – or because? – generations have insisted that they can't read it. Blackletter typefaces seem to have finally shed the "Nazi" image which was mistakenly attributed to them for decades. (Schalansky 2006: back cover text)

Several sites and articles on the Internet support this hypothesis (cf. for instance Fontblog 2006; van Aaken 2006; Schröder 2007; for an English example cf., e.g., Typophile 2006a, 2006b; also cf. Schwemer-Scheddin 1998: 66–67). However, it is striking that all these texts were written by dedicated typesetters or "typophiles." In most cases, the texts are weblogs where typophiles discuss the alleged blackletter revival controversially. A recurrent strategy on these sites is the hint on the "Nazi misunderstanding." The participants point out that "the people" (i.e., "them") falsely believe that blackletter is contaminated nationalistically and that it was the favorite type of the National Socialists, whereas "we designers" (as van Aaken 2006 put

it) know better. In this context, the "Fraktur ban" is regularly quoted, and the participants point out with relish that neo-national groups do not even use the "correct" typefaces from the 1930s, but gothic, medieval or non-German (e.g., Old English) blackletter typefaces. A large section of the participants opt for a "re-usurpation" of blackletter types in order to de-stigmatize it, whereas the more sceptical participants usually only point out either that they consider blackletter to be old-fashioned in general or that they do not like the modern re-designs.

In texts by other authors, no evidence for a de-politicization of blackletter was found. On the contrary, even the few existing references to the use of blackletter in rap music are explicitly political. While the general use of blackletter in hip hop culture is not commented on, some authors refer to an incident in 2005, when a CD by Berlin rapper *Fler* was marketed by means of explicit verbal and symbolic allusions to Nazism and anti-Semitism. This provoked a medial outcry, in the context of which the use of blackletter was also discussed. The newspaper *taz* criticized the musician to "flirt with Fraktur" (Reisin 2005), and several newspapers and commentators followed this interpretation. Obviously, the ideological frame is still widely effective even in the context of rap music, provided that other contextualization cues with a similar ideological impact co-occur.

How do we arrive at this discrepancy between the typophile and the non-typophile discourse? Evidently, what we observe here is ongoing identity work. The typophiles pit their graphic knowledge against the "false" knowledge of "the others," claim authority in the field, and thereby constitute a network of "experts." In this context, blackletter type (and typography in general) and the knowledge about these issues serve as a landmark of the group's identity.

The following section provides further evidence for this. It turns to an exemplary microanalysis of a metapragmatic negotiation of the ideological meaning of blackletter and umlauts in pop culture, which demonstrates, how heated the issue of graphic ideology obviously is.

## 3.5. "Germanness" vs. "Nordic Mythology": Ideological struggles on *wikipedia.org*

The online encyclopaedia *Wikipedia* is an interesting source for communicative ideology research, since it allows one to trace back editorial definitions of perceived realities and the associated metapragmatic debates quite closely. Due to its popularity and its authoritative status, the editorial practices can

be considered "struggle[s] over … definitions of social realities," that is to say, ideological debates in Blommaert's (1999a: 11) sense.

With regard to the subject of this chapter, the aforementioned *Wikipedia* article on the *(Heavy) Metal Umlaut* (Wikipedia 2008) is worth closer inspection. The article in its current form is the result of enormous activity. Between its first publication on April 15, 2003 and the most recent version considered dating from December 29, 2008, the article saw 1394 edits by 863 different authors (including automatic bot edits and vandalism). The activity until January 22, 2005, was captured on a screencast by the blogger Jon Udell (2005), who wanted to demonstrate "how pages evolve at Wikipedia". Udell's video, which is a fascinating piece of documentation in itself, demonstrates how the article grows rapidly from one sentence initially to a complex article consisting of several sections, many references, images and hyperlinks, and how the community deals with this development.

A particularly interesting process focused on by Udell is the ongoing negotiation of the relation between the metal umlaut and the issue of "Germanness." During the first revisions, the article only consisted of a few references to heavy metal band names and umlaut parodies. Then, on March 24, 2004, an anonymous contributor added the following paragraph:

> The idea of this, often in concert with using Blackletter types (or more often Pseudo-Blackletter), is probably to give the band name a German look and thus indirectly to suggest Hitler or the Nazis, a pretty dark theme and as such well-fitting to heavy metal. (rev. 2800299)[9]

As a consequence, both the concept of "Germanness" and references to blackletter are introduced to the article. Unsurprisingly, this strong connection of both heavy metal and Germany to National Socialism soon evoked what Udell calls the "collective editorial sensibility of the wiki authors." Only 18 hours later on the very day, another contributor changed the passage as follows:

> The idea of this, *some believe*, is to give the band name a *"Nazi" German* look, often in concert with using Blackletter types (or more often Pseudo-Blackletter). The Nazi/Hitler theme is *glorified by some heavy metal groups*. (rev. 2811047; my emphases)

This change, complemented by the comment "rewr. 'Nazi' allusion (not all German is nazi!)" in the change log, relativizes the connection, but does not

9. To access the quoted revisions of the article on *wikipedia.org*, append the revision number to the following URL: *http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?=title=Metal_umlaut&oldid=[rev. number]*.

refuse the reference itself. This version survives several further edits and persists until April 2, 2004, when yet another contributor removes both the reference to Nazism and to "Germanness." Instead, the revision introduces the notion of a "Gothic feel":

> The use of umlauts is often in concert with using Blackletter types (or more often Pseudo-Blackletter) in band logos, to give it *a more Gothic feel*. (rev. 3078839; my emphasis)

In the change log, the author elaborates as follows:

> . . . removed paragraph on bands "glorifying" Nazi/Hitler iconography; if there are bands that actually use umlauts AND Blackletter for the Nazi association, please name them.

These three edits are the start of a discursive tug-of-war in which the supporters of the hypothesis that metal umlaut and blackletter do have a connection to "Germanness" struggle with the supporters of the "mythological" theme for the "correct" ideological meaning of the graphic elements. In what follows, the most relevant editorial changes and comments are listed (in chronological order). Non-anonymous contributors are marked by bracketed capital letters, so multiple edits by specific editors can be identified. Crucial changes are emphasized:

> (1) Umlauts are often used in concert with a Blackletter or pseudo-Blackletter typeface in the band logo to give it a more *Wagnerian* feel. ([A], rev. 4317590, June 27, 2004)
>
> (2) Umlauts and other diacritics with a blackletter style typeface are a form of foreign branding intended to give a band's logo a *tough Germanic* feel. ([B], rev. 435486, June 29, 2004)
>
> (3) Umlauts and other diacritics with a blackletter style typeface are a form of foreign branding intended to give a band's logo a *Germanic "toughness."* ([C], rev. 10085591, February 7, 2005)
>
> (Change log: "'tough Germanic feel' is too jarringly subjective")
>
> (4) Umlauts and other diacritics with a blackletter style typeface are a form of foreign branding intended to give a band's logo a Germanic *or Nordic* "toughness". It is a *form of marketing* that invokes stereotypes of *boldness and strength* commonly attributed to peoples *such as the Vikings*. ([D], rev. 11910153, April 3, 2005)
>
> (Change log: "Added references to Nodic [sic!] people, particularly the Vikings")
>
> (5) Umlauts and other diacritics with a blackletter style typeface are a form of foreign branding intended to give a band's logo a Germanic or Nordic *quality*. ([D], rev. 18095317, July 3, 2005, 23:01)

(6) … to give a band's logo a Germanic or Nordic quality. *Hence, in this context the umlaut acts as an intensifier for the marketability of the band*" ([D], rev. 18095545, July 3, 2005, 23:06)

[sentence about marketability removed again by contributor [E], rev. 1921157, July 20, 2005]

(7) … such as the Vikings; author Reebee Garofalo has attributed its use to a desire for a "gothic horror" feel ([F], rev. 23131916, September 13, 2005)

(8) The use of umlauts and other diacritics with a blackletter style typeface is a form of foreign branding intended to give a band's logo a *Teutonic* quality. ([D], rev. 33784201, January 4, 2006)

(Change log: "Nordic" is a bit too specific… perhaps Germanic + Scandinavian? *compromize* and use term "Teutonic" instead")

(9) *Among English speakers*, the use of umlauts and other diacritics with a blackletter style typeface is a form of foreign branding intended to give a band's logo a Teutonic quality. ([G], rev. 255973722, December 5, 2008)

(Change log: "[f]or someone who grew up in eg de, ch, or at [Germany, Switzerland or Austria; J.S.], the connotative effect ≠ effect for someone who grew up in eg us or uk")

(10) [Addition:] *Metal* enjoys popularity throughout the world, including in countries where umlauts or other diacritics are regular features of the prevailing language's orthography. Therefore, the foreign branding effect of the metal umlaut is dependent on the beholder's background. For English or Spanish speakers, it may convey the originally intended feel, whereas German speakers understand the intended effect but can see it through a different lens. ([G], rev. 256147003, December 6, 2008)

The quoted edits and comments show how the concepts of "Germanness" and Gothic/Nordic Mythology are constantly pitted against each other. In order to enforce their respective interpretation, the editors try with different rhetorical strategies: the emphasis of specific ("German" or "Nordic") qualities (such as "toughness," "boldness"), reference to specific pop-cultural intentions (such as the non-political "marketability" attempt), implicit links (such as the rather subtle reference to "Wagnerianism" or the "horror feel"), and references to authorities. In effect, the article (provisionally) ends up in a sort of compromise, where both the reference to Nordic or Gothic mythology and the reference to a general concept of "Germanness" have succeeded, but where any political traces have been finally removed. Instead of (even provocative) references to nationalism and Nazism, less delicate characteristics such as *boldness* and *strength* were highlighted. Obviously, the dominant portion of the contributors does not want to be connected with such ideologies.

However, the discussion still indicates that the community seems to be aware of the fact that such connections might be established in the context that is generated by means of the graphic elements in question. In connection with this, it is striking that the community seems to avoid links to or discussions of explicit references of heavy metal musicians to Nazism or nationalism. Such references, however, are not uncommon. Well-known examples are a statement of Nikki Sixx (of *Mötley Crüe*) articulating his fascination in "Nazi mentality" (cf. Browne 1991), provocative posing of *Motörhead*'s front man Lemmy Kilmister in SS uniform (cf. Michaels 2008), or the enduring discussion about whether the <S> characters in the band names *KISS* and *Slayer* refer to the Sig runes (cf. Oertel 1990: 236–237). Given the contributors' obsessiveness about details in other respects, it is rather unlikely that such references simply escaped the community's attention.

Nevertheless, the general activity on the article, especially the attempt by many editors to provide the weirdest examples, also indicates that many participants first and foremost enjoyed crossing the border of English graphematics. It is obvious that this is something people have fun with, and it is likely that the graphic elements here indeed rather evokes the genre context than "Germanic" associations.

An interesting question is put forward by contributor [G] in quotes (9) and (10): do the perceptions and the interpretations of the graphic elements differ between interactants from the German-speaking world and those from other linguistic communities? Obviously, it is impossible to answer this question from the English *Wikipedia* sources, since we cannot determine where the editors come from. What we can do, though, is to include localized versions of the encyclopaedia to the analysis, the contribution to which requires at least some familiarity with the respective language. However, the localized versions of the article evoked considerably fewer controversies.

In the German version, the definition in question was more or less translated from the current English version at that time and was retained to the present, except for minor style changes. The editorial activity is significantly lower, and the article was even considered for deletion eventually.[10] There is only one case where a political reference to nationalism was introduced and then removed ten hours later on the same day (cf. *http://de.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Metal-Umlaut&oldid=32456771*.

10. Cf. *http://de.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Metal-Umlaut&oldid=21847725* (September 24, 2006). The proposal to delete the article was rejected at rev. 22115114 (October 1, 2006).

The other existing localizations (Spanish, French, Italian, Magyar, Polish, Finnish, and Swedish) are very short and show low editorial traffic as well. All of them, though, include the reference to a "Germanic," "Nordic," "Teutonic," or "Wagnerian" connotation. The low activity might be connected with a general preference for the English *Wikipedia*, at least as far as "global" topics are concerned. This needs closer inspection, though.

## 4. Conclusions

In this chapter, I have analyzed how graphic phenomena are connected with ideologies and how they are used in order to communicate ideologies. By means of graphematic phenomena (tremata, <ß>) as well as of a typographic phenomenon (blackletter) and with regard to the discursive construction of "Germanness," several characteristics of multimodal ideology construction were observed.

To begin with, the analysis substantiated the supposition that graphic elements are involved in ideology communication. Umlauts and blackletter are routinely and commonly used in specific texts with a comparable ideological function, and they are often interpreted as indices or icons of specific ideologies. Thus, graphic elements are an integral part of scriptal ideology communication, and they need to be taken into account for sociolinguistic analyses.

Furthermore, the analysis revealed that the ideological function of graphic elements is dynamic and subject to a multimodal context construction. Depending on the overall setting of contextualization cues, on the context of use, on the text genre, and on the verbal argumentation of the text, specific graphic elements might well evoke very different as well as overlapping associations such as Nazism, Gothic or medieval mythology, and "toughness" in the case of heavy metal typography. Most importantly, such associations depend on the recipients' semiotic knowledge, as the diverging interpretations of the use of umlauts and blackletter type in popular culture illustrated. Therefore, graphic elements cannot be attributed to peculiar functions beyond their actual use and without taking the discourse participants and their specific graphic knowledge into consideration.

Moreover, the analysis substantiated that graphic elements are not only involved in the framing of texts, but that they are also used by social networks in order to indicate their ideology (consider such different examples as the neo-nationalist scene, conservative groups, heavy metal addicts, and gangsta rap musicians). Since this is so, they can also be and are in fact used

for "othering" purposes, as the anti-fascist examples as well as the heavy metal parodies demonstrated. Graphic variation, in other words, is socially significant.

As both the example of the typophile discourse and the analysis of the revision history of the *Metal Umlaut* article revealed, even graphic knowledge itself can become the focus of metapragmatic action (cf. for further examples from typophile discourse Danet 2001: 289–344). The latter case demonstrated how diverging graphic forms of knowledge may clash within the process of negotiating an authoritative definition and interpretation of graphic practices. Here, the semiotic flow can be witnessed *in actu*. Furthermore, but more specifically in the former case of the typophile discourse, we can observe how group members constitute their ideology by means of their graphic knowledge, which is then pitted as "the right knowledge" against "the false assumptions" of "the others" – a process that has often been described with regard to identity work by means of language ideologies (cf. Johnson 2005 for the German spelling reform debate; Spitzmüller 2007b for linguistic purism). The parallels are striking.

However, contrary to language ideologies, graphic ideologies are yet to be explored. This particularly holds true if the idea of multimodality is taken seriously. Even if it had to be selective, the analysis has at least attempted to show that a joint analysis of different graphic features (such as graphematic and typographic elements) is the way to go, since the interrelation of different modes is a crucial part of the semiosis. The present chapter has attempted to underline that going that way and widening the scope towards graphics is a worthy goal for a linguistics that is interested in how ideology shapes communication.[11]

## Appendix: List of figures

1a *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 5 October 2007, front page.
1b Restaurant sign, Detroit, Michigan.
1c *Der Spiegel* 4 (22 January 2001), front cover (title story '300 years of Prussia' – a discordant heritage).
2a Trade in nationalist devotional objects.
URL: *http://www.germaniainternational. com/third.html* <2008-12-22>.

11. I am indebted to Nadio Giger for proofreading and commenting the manuscript, and to Jannis Androutsopoulos for helpful comments on a first version. All remaining errors are obviously my own.

2b CD cover of the neo-nationalist rock band *Nordlicht*.
URL: *http://www.rocknord24. com/shopneu/catalog/images/Nordlicht -Soehne der Germanen-.jpg* <2008-12-22>.

2c Neonazi demonstration against the exhibition *Verbrechen der Wehrmacht* ('Crimes of the Wehrmacht'), Hamburg, March 2004.
URL: *http://www.hamburg.de/archiv/232230/wehrmachtsaustellung-demo-hamburg-270304-artikel.html* <2010-04-20>.

2d Lighter "nationalist" from a nationalist Internet shop.
URL: *http://www.weltnetzladen.com/4c1f8d953a11dc001/cd0a2396930a9b301/index.php* <2008-12-23>.

3a Internet site *www.deutschtum.net*.
URL: *http://www.deutschtum.net* <2008-12-22>.

3b "Anglicisms are flooding our country. Let's go into action against them!"
URL: *http://sprachkampf.de.vu* <2002-08-07>.

3c Internet site of the *Bismarckbund e.V.*
URL: *http://www.bismarckbund.de* <2008-12-23>.

4a "Zero tolerance for Nazis. Xenophobia must stop!": Banner of the *Social Democratic Party* (SPD) Schorndorf, Germany, Oct 2008.
URL: *http://www.spd-schorndorf.de/index.php?nr=12286* <2008-12-16>.

4b "Educational material: Recognize right-wing extremism!" (Borchert et al. 2002, front cover).

4c Flyer announcing a "night against forgetting" on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of the National Socialist pogrom against Jews in November 1938, *Jewish Center Zurich*, October 2008.

4d Austrian advertisement that calls for voting, *Der Standard* (9 June 1994), quoted from Schopp (2002: 113).

5 Heavy metal typography:?(1) Internet site *http://www.joinlemmysarmy.com/1280x800/index.html* <2008-12-27>; (2) Motörhead: *The Best of* (Roadrunner Records, 1993), LP cover; (3) Spinal Tap logo; (4) GROTUS: *Mother of Pearl* (Smelly Records, 1991), single cover; (5) Chuck Klosterman: *Fargo Rock City. A Heavy Metal Odyssey in Rural Nörth Daköta*, New York: Scribner (new ed., 2 September 2002), front cover; (6) Seb Hunter: *Hell bent for Leather. Confessions of a Heavy Metal Addict.* New York: Fourth Estate 2004, front cover; (7) character "Lars Ümlaut" from the computer game *Guitar Hero*, action figure: McFarlane toys, 2008.

6 Rbk advertisement (campaign "I am what I am", as of February 2005); URL: *http://www.rbk.com/de/news/I+AM+WHAT+I+AM.htm* <2007-04-20>.

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